

HOPE
"Refocus"
May 10, 2015

"...the biggest problem for women in the future will be to decide what to do with all their free time."

"About this time, a man and woman from the tribe of Levi got married. The woman became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She saw that he was a special baby and kept him hidden for three months. But when she could no longer hide him, she got a basket made of papyrus reeds and waterproofed it with tar and pitch. She put the baby in the basket and laid it among the reeds along the bank of the Nile River. The baby's sister then stood at a distance, watching to see what would happen to him.

Soon Pharaoh's daughter came down to bathe in the river, and her attendants walked along the riverbank. When the princess saw the basket among the reeds, she sent her maid to get it for her. When the princess opened it, she saw the baby. The little boy was crying, and she felt sorry for him. "This must be one of the Hebrew children," she said. Then the baby's sister approached the princess. "Should I go and find one of the Hebrew women to nurse the baby for you?" she asked. "Yes, do!" the princess replied. So the girl went and called the baby's mother. "Take this baby and nurse him for me," the princess told the baby's mother. "I will pay you for your help." So the woman took her baby home and nursed him.

Later, when the boy was older, his mother brought him back to Pharaoh's daughter, who adopted him as her own son. The princess named him Moses, for she explained, "I lifted him out of the water."
Exodus 2:2-10 (NLT)

What Great Moms do to build Hope into their Kids (based on the life of Jochebed):

1. Great Moms have the ability to see beyond the present into the potential (vs 2)

"I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I press on..."
Philippians 3:13, 14 (NLT)

2 great things happen when you decide to refocus on the future:

- forgetting the past frees you
- looking forward to what can be fuels you

2. Great Moms launch their kids into life expecting God to show up (vs 3)

Moses was 80 years old before he began living out his full God potential.

3. Great Moms make tough sacrifices for their kids (vs 10)

5 unsung hero-Moms deserving special recognition:

- Those who gave up their baby for adoption
- Those who have an overwhelming desire to have children, but can't.
- Single moms
- Those who adopt or serve as foster moms
- Those who have special needs kids

Leadership Tip!

If your group is taking the week off for Mother's Day, please send this Study Guide to your group members for their personal use. Encourage everyone to discuss the Guide as a couple, a family, or with friends at their convenience.

Don't forget to have some time to play soon and come prepared to serve at next week's big Impact Others Sunday!

HOPE - Refocus**STARTER QUESTION:**

Now that you have had a week to reflect and think about bitterness and unforgiveness that may be in your life, what is one thing that God has shown you?

MAIN IDEA:

Happy Mother's Day! As we look at our focus this week, let's make sure we stop for a moment and appreciate all the mothers in our lives.

As we begin our fifth week in this series, we get closer to finishing up what we want to spend some time honing in how we can refocus ourselves. Pastor Hank begins his message with an inside look at Moses's mother. This mother placed her faith in God in a way that many could never understand. Although we know a lot about her son, we actually never learn her name or know much about her from the four short paragraphs we have about her (Exodus 2).

This story lead to Hank's first point - Great moms have the ability to see beyond the present into the potential.

Whether you are a mom or not, how have you seen this in your own life? When is a time your mom or a motherly figure believed in the potential you possess?

As we think about people who have believed in us throughout our lives, they often encourage us to change our focus. This refocusing often includes an honest look at perspectives versus reality. When we are stuck in a bad perspective we need someone to help us refocus and look at the true reality. When there are times when the reality is bad we need some perspective change to help us refocus on what is most important. This verse from Paul helps us see this a littler clearer -

Philippians 3:13, 14 (NLT)

"I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I press on..."

What is one thing you need to refocus yourself around? Your past? Your future? Your goals?

In light of this passage from Philippians, we believe two powerful things can happen when we become to change our focus.

- forgetting the past frees you
- looking forward to what could happen will fuel you

Pick one of these two that you struggle when it comes to focus: Forgetting the past, or looking ahead to what could happen?

For our hope to be placed fully in Jesus we have to start asking ourselves about where we need to refocus our thoughts and actions. As we looked at last week, our hope is often based on whether or not we are able to let it go. Letting go of our bitterness or unforgiveness will greatly determine where we need to change our focus.

Let's look at this first aspect as it pertains to our past. We can be encouraged about our past when we refocus our thoughts away from the past and instead on what Christ has done for us -

Psalm 103:12 (NLT)

He has removed our sins as far from us as the east is from the west.

Also we can take heart from verses like this -

1 John 1:9 (NLT)

But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness.

When it comes to our past, what do verses like these remind us?

As we look at our future and where we place our hope moving forward, we are able to claim passages like these from Psalms and 1 Timothy -

Psalm 33:20-22 (NLT)

We put our hope in the Lord. He is our help and our shield. In him our hearts rejoice, for we trust in his holy name. Let your unfailing love surround us, Lord, for our hope is in you alone.

1 Timothy 4:10 (NLT)

This is why we work hard and continue to struggle, for our hope is in the living God, who is the Savior of all people and particularly of all believers.

Looking ahead to our future and placing our hope in Jesus is hard at times, but the reward is supernatural as we just read. Ultimately our focus and our hope are tied together.

Final Question:

Where is your focus right now and where do you feel like you need to refocus?

ACTION STEPS:

- 1) Memorize one of the verses from the Study Guide this upcoming week. Depending on what you struggle with, pick a verse or passage that will help encourage you and refocus as you move forward.
- 2) Give permission to friends and Life Group teammates to ask you simply, "Where is your focus?"
- 3) Pray for each other often and be sure to know which area they are asking for God's help so you can pray specifically for them.

FINAL THOUGHTS:

We have been talking about our hope a lot in this series and the various aspects that impact our hope. Today is no different, God has been at work in each of us helping us look at how we can refocus our lives. Romans 15:13 has been the key verse we have looked at throughout this series. Let's finish up this week's time together by reading this powerful verse -

Romans 15:13 (NLT)

I pray that God, the source of hope, will fill you completely with joy and peace because you trust in him. Then you will overflow with confident hope through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Pray Together -

Close in prayer as a group or in smaller groups based on today's topic and personal requests members have.

FAMILY FOCUS

Pin the Corsage Mother's Day Object Lesson (Proverbs 1:8)

Mother's Day is upon us! What an awesome time to honor to the mothers in our church. You'll probably be busy leading crafts and wrapping gifts to send home with the kids but don't forget the lesson. Usually, on major holidays, I do spend a lot of time crafting with our groups but I always take a little time to present an object lesson.

One of my favorite verses to use is: Listen, my son, to your father's instruction and do not forsake your mother's teaching. (Proverbs 1:8) Of course, it's not the only verse you can use but I find kids remember it pretty easily. Here's how to present this Pin the Corsage Mother's Day lesson...

What You'll Need

Butcher or construction paper
Markers
Push pins
Paper flowers (enough for each child to have one)
Scissors
Pens
Scotch tape
Blindfold
Prepare to Teach

Hang the paper/posterboard on the wall with the pushpins. Draw the upper torso and head of a Mom on the board. Outline the drawing with a marker and add a heart where the heart should be.

Cut out flower shapes out with scissors. Each child needs one flower. Place the pens on the table wear you will be working.

Let's Teach

Guess what today is, y'all! That's right! It is Mother's Day. Mothers are so special. They do so much for us, don't they? You can see that I have a picture of a Mom on the wall. In a minute, we are going to play a game but first I want to read this verse to you. (Read the above verse.) See, that? Teaching us things is Mom's job. I bet if you try, you can think of something that your Mom taught you. For example, my Mom taught me to always share what I have with others. What did your Mom teach you? Use your pin to write one thing on the paper flower. Tell me what your Mom taught you. When everyone does that, we will play a game. (Wait for everyone to write a sentence on their flower.)

Now, comes the fun part. One a time, I am going to blind fold you and give you the chance to slap your flower right on Mom's heart. Let's see who gets the closest. Ready? (Add tape to the back of each heart and line the children up. Have each child put on the blindfold and give it a try.)